

MEMORANDUM FOR: Personnel Director

SUBJECT : Exceptions from Medical Examinations

1. From time to time this Office receives the requests of individual Agency employees to be exempted from participation in medical examinations. Invariably the reason given for such a request is the incompatibility of submission to a medical examination with the individual's religious beliefs. Although this Office has granted one or two exceptions, it was made clear that such action was not to be construed as establishing a policy, but confined solely to the individual case.

2. It is believed that an Agency policy on the questions posed by requests for exemption must be developed. It is requested, therefore, that your Office explore various aspects of the problem, and recommend future policy governing these cases. Your study should cover such questions as:

a. What authority exists for waiving medical examinations, whether at the request of applicants in connection with entrance-on-duty examinations, or of Agency personnel in connection with periodic routine examinations, or special examinations scheduled prior to permanent change of station, or for other reasons?

b. If physical examination is waived, does the Agency incur special liability in the event of subsequent disability on the part of the employee?

c. What penalties may be enforced against personnel who refuse to participate in physical examinations prescribed by the Medical Office? Does refusal to participate constitute sufficient justification to initiate separation action?

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d. What public policy pronouncements or practices exist with respect to the problem of conflicts between religious beliefs and general administrative requirements? In this connection, please cite examples which have relevance to the problem under consideration.

3. Please coordinate your study with other interested Offices, and forward to this Office not later than 16 October 1953.

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LAWRENCE R. HUSTON
Acting Deputy Director
(Administration)

SA/DD/A:DCX:sh(24 Sep 53)

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